

Young gymnasts hone skills at summer clinic

Story: DENNIS O'CONNOR
Photo: STEPHEN CANTRELL

Six-year-old Becky LaLonde shyly reflected the feelings of many students when she said the best thing she liked about her gymnastics class was the bars and the beams. In fact, most of the youngsters like the teachers and all the gymnastics events at Detroit Country Day School.

The gymnastics clinic was the newest addition to the growing number of summer activities at Country Day. It was a four-week class directed by the Borgo Sisters School of Dance and Gymnastics.

Although this was only the first year for the activity, interest was tremendous as more than 150 youngsters from ages 5 to 13 participated anywhere from one to all four weeks.

The classes, which ended last Friday, were held at the Country Day gymnasium. The students were taught by seven instructors from the Royal Oak-based Borgo school.

"THE BORGOSI sisters have done a

first class job with the program," Country Day Athletic Director Gene Reilly said. "They have been a fine addition to our camp."

Sisters Frances and Virginia Borgo directed all the activities, which included gymnastic skills and techniques for both beginners and advanced students.

"It is not really a beginning camp," said Frances Borgo. "Some (students) are pretty good and some are just beginners. We are just as interested with the untalented students as well as the talented ones."

Most of the students at this gymnastic school were girls. Reilly said, however, expansion is possible next year and boys are always welcome to participate. He felt the increased interest with girls was based on the high school athletic curriculum, which only offers girls gymnastics as a team sport.

"Girls gymnastics has been more popular. It's really taken off," Borgo said. "But I think eventually it will be even."

THE CLASSES were held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through

Thursday, and 9 a.m. to noon on Friday. The students remained at Country Day for an hour lunch in the cafeteria and usually received pool privileges at 2 p.m. daily after each long workout.

Each session began with stretch exercises as students were taught the proper way to prepare for gymnastic activities without hurting their muscles. The warmup also included different techniques in ballet, which are also beneficial for stretching muscles.

The children then rotated to different apparatuses and were taught basic skills and stunts to help improve their gymnastic knowledge.

The youngsters moved in groups to the balance beam, uneven parallel bars, vault and the mat (for tumbling). They were placed in groups based on their individual abilities on the first day of classes.

"A good teacher can just see what the child is capable of doing and puts them in groups," Borgo explained. "It doesn't really matter,

however. We divide them up by ability so they can get the most out of it — that's the important thing."

One element the Borgo sisters stressed at the mini-clinic was proper attitude and behavior of all the potential gymnasts.

"I THINK this camp has really proven beneficial," Borgo said. "We take time each day to talk to (the children) and to show them how to be nice — and not just laugh when others are learning to do something."

Netter romps

Aaron Krickstein, an 11-year-old from Grosse Pointe, overpowered his older competitors and breezed to the title in the Boys' 14 and Under Singles tournament last week at the Detroit Squash and Tennis Club in Farmington Hills.

Krickstein, currently rated No. 3 in the nation by the United States Tennis Association (USTA), had little trouble throughout the tourney. He disposed of No. 4 seed Adam Gordon of Farmington Hills, 6-0, 6-0, in the semifinals, then crushed the No. 3 seed, Mark Potter of Troy, 6-0, 6-1, in the finals.

Potter moved into the finals after defeating unseeded Dave Brady of Farmington Hills, 6-1, 6-3, in the semis. Krickstein was the No. 1 seed in the tournament.

"He (Krickstein) has a chance to be No. 1 in the 12 and Under category in the U.S. (in USTA rankings)," said

Chuck Karabell, tournament director and manager of the host club.

"He's a classy little tennis player, and he's going to be nationally ranked for a long time."

In the Girls' 14 and Under singles, No. 1 seed Erin Ashare of Bloomfield Hills won in straight sets over her younger opponent, Chris Nagel of West Bloomfield, 6-0, 6-4.

Ashare, a 13-year-old ranked No. 5 in 14 and Unders by the Southeastern Michigan Tennis Association (SEMATA), walloped Christine Giles of Plymouth, 6-1, 6-0, in the semifinals. Giles was unseeded.

Nagel, seeded No. 2 for the tournament and ranked No.1 in 12 and Unders by SEMATA, downed the No. 3 seed, Kelly Davidson of Farmington Hills, 1-6, 6-2, 7-5, to advance to the finals. Nagel trailed Davidson, 5-1, in the last set before rallying to win six straight games and the match.

Woodbrooke wins

Farmington Glen's Woodbrooke, also in dual meet swim season Farmington Hills, improved its record to 4-1 on the season. Both teams Woodbrooke Hills, 287-278, last Thursday in the upper division of the NSSL.

Woodbrooke had five double-winners in the meet and had one record broken. Three team straight loss for Glen, which won only its opening meet of the season.

swimmers won two individual events apiece.

Liz Worthen won twice in the 7 & 8-year-old age division, taking the girls' 25-meter freestyle (17.37) and the 25-meter backstroke (20.89).

In the 9 & 10 age group, Jennifer Rowe captured the girls' 50-meter freestyle (36.02) and the 50-meter backstroke (42.81), while teammate Michael Turner won both the boys' 50-meter freestyle (33.11) and the 50-meter butterfly (39.46).

Chris Leslie was a double-winner for Woodbrooke in the 11 & 12 age category, taking the boys' 100-meter individual medley (1:19.13) and the 50-meter butterfly (35.05).

In the 13 & 14 age division, Paul Larson won the boys' 100-meter individual medley (1:09.8) and the 50-meter breaststroke (37.5), while Kim Pogue captured the girls' 50-meter butterfly (33.6) and the 100-meter individual medley (1:17.1).

Theresa Button won twice in the 15-17 age group, taking the girls' 100-meter freestyle (1:07.5) and the 100-meter individual medley (1:12.08).

Button's clocking in the individual medley was a new Glen record.

AT THE MOMENT, speed roller skating isn't considered an Olympic sport. But Dooley did say that it "may be an exhibition sport in '84, and we're trying hard to make it an Olympic sport for '88."

Dooley finds the time to practice her roller skating because the sport has become a part of her family life. It was while roller skating that she first met her husband, Virgil, who is now her coach.

Virgil Dooley raced for 24 years before retiring five years ago to begin coaching. He is a past national champion and was a competitor in the World Meet in 1968. The Dooleys moved to Livonia in 1972, and Virgil has been manager of Bonaventure Skating Center, on Halsted Road in Farmington, since April of 1977.

"It's something our whole family is involved in," Suzanne said. "I just really enjoy it. . . the competition, the travel."

The rest of the summer will be filled with travel for Suzanne. The Sports Festival, sponsored by the U.S. Olympic Committee and held at the Olympic training sites in Colorado Springs, Co., will be her next stop. That will be on July 27-31.

After that, it will be off to the National Roller Skating championships in Ft. Worth, Texas, on Aug. 12-16. And in September it will be the World Meet.

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Skip Farley (left) and Tom Marquard (right), two instructors from the Borgo school, help a young gymnast with a stunt on the vault.

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